REGISTER OF
CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS

Date of entry in Register:	10 December 1998
Name of applicant/court:	Society for Promotion of Community Standards
Applicant to the Labelling Body:	Not Applicable
Title of Publication:	New Zealand Truth & TV Extra January 23, 1998
Other Known Titles:	New Truth and TV Extra
Director:	Not Applicable
Producer:	Not Applicable
Publisher:	Independent News Auckland Limited
Author:	Not Applicable
Format:	Newspaper
Country of Origin:	New Zealand
Language:	English

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Components of film originally examined: Not Applicable.

Feature:	Running time:
Trailers:	Running time:
	Total Running time:

Excision/Alteration: Not Applicable.

Reason(s) for Excision:

Not Applicable.

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Classification Decision:

Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.

Display Conditions:

That when the publication is on public display, the classification given to the publication must be shown on the publication; or any package in which the publication is kept
and
That the publication must be publicly displayed only in a sealed package.

Descriptive Note:

Not Applicable.

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Direction to issue a label has been given on: Not Applicable.

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SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR DECISION:

The newspaper entitled *New Zealand Truth & TV Extra, January 23, 1998* is classified as:
Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.

The tabloid format newspaper consists of 40 pages variously printed in colour and black on white. The newspaper is published weekly for national distribution. The greater proportion of the newspaper is text, however bold headlines and pictures are visually dominant. Pictures include photographs and cartoons. A large crossword is also included. The newspaper is roughly divided into four sections, with general interest stories, columns and news at the front, then television listings for a week, followed by ‘adult’ information, and sports pages at the rear. The sports section covers six pages, television listings and items about entertainers cover eight pages, and ‘adult’ information covers 12 pages. The remainder of the newspaper is news and general interest articles. The easy reading text is heavily coloured by colloquial language with a sensationalist tone.

The classification is primarily due to the manner in which, and extent to which, the newspaper deals with sexual matters. The sexual content is an extensive, major proportion of the content, both in terms of actual coverage and its impact on dominant effect and general tone. Females in particular are degraded by the sensationalised treatment of sex and are presented to a predominantly male readership as constantly interested in and craving, if not available for, sexual activity with males. This effect is intensified in and by the 'Adults Only' section, however interest articles, columns and small items in which the main topic is sex presented in a sensationalist tone, and the mildly titillatory manner in which women are depicted, establish the sexual tone even before the reader reaches the 'adult' section. Close-up images of females' body parts which dehumanise the subjects by reducing them to a body part as a focus of reader interest contribute to the effect of presenting females primarily as sexual entities.

The 'Adults Only' section includes frequent and express references to sexual activity. Items advertised for sale include explicit sex video recordings, vibrators, dildos, blow up sex dolls, and imitation female genital organs. Colour reproductions of video slicks have low impact, however, references in print to sexual activities are more impactful as they are more direct and repetitive. The entire section is pervaded with express references to 'anal' and 'oral' sexual activity. Titillatory photographs are included in some display advertisements.

In the opinion of the Classification Office, the availability of this newspaper to children and young people is likely to contribute to or support perceptions of women as constantly craving and available for sexual activity or primarily being sexual entities, particularly among males.

Referring to New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 issues, the Classification Office considers that the classification of the newspaper is consistent with the primary aim of limiting likely injury to the public good, without being unduly restrictive. The combined effect of the characteristics described above renders the newspaper unsuitable for children and young persons. However, the content and style of the newspaper is intended to appeal to an adult readership, and the degree to which females are degraded is not sufficiently intense to warrant further limiting the availability of the newspaper.

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